

**DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MAY 5, 2008**

The Board of Directors of the Davenport Community School District met in open session for a Committee of the Whole meeting Monday, May 5, 2008, pursuant to law. The meeting was held in the Jim Hester Board Room at the Administration Service Center, 1606 Brady Street, Davenport, Iowa, in said District. President Patt Zamora called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

On roll call the following board members were present: President Patt Zamora; Directors Richard Clewell, Nikki De Fauw, Ralph Johanson, Ken Krumwiede, Larry Roberson, and Tim Tupper. Superintendent Almanza attended as well other administrators.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Monthly Financials for March: Mrs. Claudia Wood reviewed the financial report board members received for the end of the quarter, March 2008. They went over financial statements, grants, revenues, expenditures, self-insurance, and investments. Board members asked questions about salaries, reductions and impacts on special education staff, and insurance fund balance. Mrs. Tangen shared a new statement showing Food and Nutrition costs and revenue was being included this time so the Board can monitor better. Director Johanson asked about having comparisons made for self-insurance so we can see an average cost per claim or number of people. President Zamora asked for an anticipated general fund balance for the end of the year.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Waddell Property in Blue Grass: Mrs. Tangen handed out a plat map showing property in Blue Grass being offered as a donation to the school district by Mrs. Joan Waddell. The property is adjacent to the Blue Grass School. The administration feels this would be good for the district and the long-range plans for that area was looking at additional parking space. There is only one way in and out of the school area and Parcel B would provide a new access. There were questions from the Board about title searches and hazardous materials on the property. Director Johanson expressed concern that once we accepted the property we would be liable and we should have a survey done first. Mr. Martin said they could check on this. Director De Fauw said the Policy Committee had been working on a policy dealing with liability when accepting gifts from citizens. We should consider whether we can accept a gift without an evaluation of expenses which might be incurred later. The extension office might be able to help us more. This was a wonderful gift from Mrs. Waddell but it is important to check out first. Mr. Martin would start the process.

Operations and Facilities Update: Mr. Martin presented an update on various projects going on at buildings in the district. He talked about changes in the plans for the Kimberly Center with more student focus. He met with the principal and others and when over considerations in the design. Their main concerns were for increasing safety/security with changes in the vestibule area, having cameras, and adding skylights for lighting. If designed correctly, the skylights will not leak but will give added light inside the building. He talked about the gym, hallways, student gathering areas, new flooring and carpets. There will be more security with the front office, moving the nurse's office, change the front façade, and adding an arch and planters. The costs will be more than the \$300,000 budget, but more money will be available after July 1. Director Clewell talked about meeting with students and they would like more room in the narrow hallways. Mr. Martin talked about the challenges in this building and how one remodeling project affects another part of the structure. There were questions about fire codes, making improvements in the building that impact student achievement and spending an appropriate amount to do the right work.

Superintendent Almanza mentioned if we work out something for the use of the Armory facilities, we might be able to move the bakery out of the Kimberly Center and that would expand room for students. We are hoping to extend the hours so this can be a true alternative center for people. Director Krumwiede talked about the original proposal showing modifications for office staff and asked if we are dropping this idea. Mr. Martin talked about renovations which will make accommodations and help staff to work better with the space. Director Krumwiede talked about concerns he heard about from students – lighting, ventilation, and hallway space. Mr. Martin will do more research on these areas and get back to the Board with plans.

There were other areas of interest to report about including the groundbreaking at North High, summer projects, and beginning discussion about air conditioning needs at buildings. There was discussion about holding meetings with the public to talk about air conditioning and whether this has already been done earlier. Mr. Almanza said we need to have a clear picture of what parents and the Board want to do with air conditioning. We can talk about a time frame and long-range plan for our buildings. We need to consider future utility costs and the impact on the type of school calendar we prepare. President Zamora said she needed more data on the benefits of air conditioning at schools. Director De Fauw felt we needed to look at this in the context of the bigger picture and ask what does or doesn't happen depending on air conditioning in our schools.

Mrs. Tangen indicated board members had previously gotten a list of priorities for each building that was prepared to help them know what people had already said about use of funds. Some board members responded with their priorities but others needed more details before making a priority list. Director De Fauw added several board members wanted cost figures included with the projects to help them look at priorities. Director Tupper thought the Board didn't like the process used to come up with the priorities and they didn't have input into the list. There wasn't enough data to allow them to make any decisions on priorities. Vice President Roberson said the board members needed data and information about what type of calendar people wanted. President Zamora said back with the first local option tax came around there was a specific list of priorities in phases listed and people found this very helpful. We hired a consultant but we should be able to do this again by ourselves. Mr. Scott said this isn't just about air conditioning but there is an affect on heating as we do remodeling work. There is also the matter of air quality to be considered. Director Tupper talked about students and employees with allergies that are affected by the quality of air in our buildings. Director Krumwiede agreed with these concerns and believed ventilation was an important part of this discussion.

Director Clewell felt a full discussion about priorities was needed but the process has to be reviewed. President Zamora said in the past each building gave us a list and then we had district-wide projects to consider. The superintendent reminded the Board they had a list of the projects and we need to look at a range of issues including air conditioning, air quality, long-term costs, and implementation of a schedule. Director Tupper felt they had received some information but it wasn't complete. Mr. Almanza said buildings asked for a number of things including additional rooms; but with declining enrollment, we didn't include everything they wanted. At the middle schools security is an issue and priority. Director Tupper was concerned with the process because the staff moves around and people make a decision but then go into another building. He didn't feel this was the consistent or best way to get input because of staff mobility. Mrs. Tangen explained how the operational staff was involved in discussions and they know the needs and background of our buildings which is very helpful. President Zamora said we also wanted more technology needs added to our facility lists.

Mr. Martin talked about the participation in the summer food programs and we will be serving 24 sites in our district for meals.

Armory Facility by Brady Street Stadium: Mrs. Tangen explained the Iowa National Guard was interested in giving us two pieces of property they own on Brady and East 36th in trade for a 99-year lease of property we have at the West Kimberly site adjacent to our ball complex. They would be building a new armory complex there. We are recommending the Board consider the gift and exchange arrangement. The process will take 5 to 10 years to complete and we could consider usage options for the property as part of our long-range facility planning. The Board asked about hazardous materials on the land, the historical status of the buildings, and multiple use plans. Mr. Almanza said the buildings were climate controlled and could be used for storage which would allow for equipment to be stored and it won't rust. We could load and unload trucks, expand the bus barn areas, and have excess parking for the stadium. We are beginning the process and are looking at this down the road. Director Tupper asked about the value of our property and their property. We will maintain enough land at the West Kimberly site so we can expand the soccer field. The District purchased the land years ago and it is leased for farming at this time. Several board members felt this should be considered in the best interest of the District and seems responsible as long as the hazardous materials study is done so we are not liable for disposal costs. Mrs. Tangen will provide board members with information they got from Iowa City on a similar proposal.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY REPORT:

District Vision, Constituency Meetings: Director Clewell led a discussion about the process being used for creating a district vision. There are a number of phases including focus groups, Local School Improvement Advisory Committee input, presentation to the Board, and strategic planning and feedback. He listed the 12 focus groups to be involved: 1) District leadership team; 2) parent representatives from schools; 3) advisory councils; 4) teachers; 5) United Neighbors; 6) Churches United; 7) DavenportOne and Forward Scott County; 8) Farm Bureau; 9) Davenport Schools Foundation; 10) Board of Realtors; 11) higher education groups such as Scott Community College and St. Ambrose; and 12) Department of Defense and military groups such as ROTC and the Arsenal. Director De Fauw added the preschools should be represented also and Rachael Mullins is working with them at this time. Social service agencies are included in the Local School Improvement Advisory Committee but we should have a group for students including student board members. Director De Fauw asked about a time schedule with these groups in order to know when board members could help with the discussions. Director Clewell and Krumwiede will be meeting with the Davenport Schools Foundation on May 13th. Director De Fauw asked about having a specific structure for the meeting or a questionnaire for each meeting for consistency. The superintendent agreed a questionnaire would help with the focus groups. Director De Fauw also felt having a standard format would help make the input unbiased and fair. Director Clewell thought the meetings should have a minimum amount of structure to allow for creative ideas to be expressed.

Legislative Update: Director Clewell mentioned an ICN meeting where IASB updated board members about the legislative session. Director Johanson, Krumwiede, and Board Secretary Kortemeyer attended the meeting in Eldridge. They heard about Iowa core curriculum, teacher quality, allowable growth, four-year terms and election changes to every other year, open meetings law, collective bargaining, and the state-wide penny. We need to look at our 2008 priorities for legislative advocacy and have a platform with IASB. We need to select our top five priorities from the list. The Board received a list of IASB priorities this year to examine. More discussion will be done in June and selection needs to be done by July of the top five choices. Director Johanson left the meeting around 6:45 PM during this discussion period. Director Clewell continued with a discussion about new issues for legislative advocacy and said we need to work with the superintendent who can be an advocate for our district.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Liaison Positions, Truancy, and Drop-Out Prevention: Dr. O'Melia went over the job descriptions and criteria for two positions: 1) Community College/High School Support Liaison

and 2) Family Support Liaison. There have been 20 applications for the first position which were screened. Criteria were developed and an interview team will be pulled together. We are still developing details for the position and addressing matters such as steps, space, access to ESIS, reporting, time and hours, and a calendar schedule for the job. Both jobs should include having necessary technology and computer skills. They will have to be able to analyze data and present reports. The Family Support Liaison position is for three people and we are looking at the job structure. Several people attended a workshop recently called, "Check and Connect". It dealt with ways to have a systematic access and communication with students and getting a timely response for intervention. We have learned parents don't always know about the resources or assistance. The Board learned more about getting services to families early. On May 7 the Governor is holding a summit in Des Moines on drop-out prevention and we have 17 people from our district attending. The school districts will develop plans for stopping students from dropping out. We are way ahead of other districts in our initiatives. Board members asked additional questions about the positions and making sure these employees are working with the students and families and not just doing paperwork in an office. There were questions about what we do currently for truant students and narrowing the focus. Vice President Roberson was thankful we were adding these positions, but felt we needed to look at the applicants differently. He wasn't sure if the requirements listed for the jobs would really find the right person intended to do a good job with students. We need to ask other questions and find people who relate with students in a certain way. The focus on these applications was too narrow and not a growth development like of job. Dr. O'Melia said they were open to more suggestions about these positions and the job assignments. Vice President Roberson wondered about our focus and having an opportunity for a different perspective than what we are listing.

The Superintendent talked about individuals who would work with this position and be involved such as United Neighbors and parent volunteers. We feel the greater the flexibility, the better. We may dialogue more about the position at the summit on Wednesday. Vice President Roberson thought that everyone was using the same thought process and we need to find individuals who have heart, are tough minded, and have good thinking skills. President Zamora added that this was very important to the Board to find the right people to do the job. Director Tupper felt this wasn't just a three person job but we need to look for more resources. Director Clewell wanted to make sure there would be parent involvement with the liaisons so we can engage them in education and helping students stay in school.

Open Enrollment:

Mrs. Ethel Reynolds reported to the Board on how the open enrollment process was working this year and how staff had processed the data from applications. She talked about collection of data from applications, using SES and achievement numbers, working to identify students, and assessing the information. She used a handout to show the students in A & B categories and explained how siblings were included in numbers. There was a formula applied to come up with the correct number of students. There were 75 applications with 16 from category A and 59 from category B. Mrs. Reynolds explained how the formula was applied to these categories and how the denials and approvals were figured out. She explained more about the role of siblings in the count basis and not dividing families. She talked about identifying students who could leave and how there were students from home school assistance programs involved. She talked about making matches correctly and identifying families. President Zamora would like to have more information about why students leave and Director Krumwiede would like information about what grade level the students were who made application to leave. Dr. O'Melia answered some questions and talked about a case where the teacher worked in another district and the reason for the request was for convenience. Director Krumwiede wondered if the other school districts offered different options than what we have, and it would be helpful to know about this and the impact on our schools. They talked about the number of students from other districts and how the numbers worked out for denials and approvals. Director Tupper asked about how the parents were contacted about the decisions. Mrs. Reynolds said letters went out and they have had a few phone calls but have talked people through the process. Dr. O'Melia said they were trying to be

very sensitive to the families when they call. The next step will be to apply this process to the intra-district open enrollment requests.

Technology Report: Tom Wagner and Gary Sloat quickly went through their report on the technology efforts in our school district. Mr. Wagner talked about the bid approval from Media Com last January and how this was working out. He also shared information about the contract pending for e-rate approval. Media Com is doing work now to get everything in place by July 1. He talked about pulling cable and purchasing hardware and new routers. AEA is installing what we need to handle the increased demand for technology in our buildings. We have purchased upgrades and we can handle more traffic to and from our schools. The Board heard more about the e-rate and universal service programs. They received a written report detailing much of the work being done at this point and showing improvements planned. Board members had some questions about services received and resources available for our students. Vice President Roberson had to leave the discussion and meeting around 8:00 PM. Mr. Gary Sloat talked about telecom services, impacts of new technology opportunities for our students and staff, and how there were many changes for software and assistance to our buildings. He talked about the turnover in the technology staff and how we have many new people in place who are working long hours to make sure our system works well. He talked about the LIS performance indicators and how there are 5000 computers running in the district. There were 3852 work orders since July 2007 which his staff has completed. There are only 39 open work orders and that was due to access to parts for machines. They have established an obsolescence and replacement cycle hoping for about 1500 per year and replacing computers in a four-year cycle. We are working in an ever-changing field and we try to keep people updated in the technology field.

Mr. Wagner and Mr. Sloat talked about news they received about the Microsoft settlement today and shared some materials with the board members to read. Director Tupper had questions about the performance indicators and expectations for replacement of computers. The superintendent talked about using industry standards and funding down the way using PPEL and local option sales tax money if applicable. They talked about computers and climate control needs. Director Tupper stated he has been critical of the computers we have and we need to fund this replacement cycle soon. He talked about how requests are made for repairs through the media person at the building and how this sometimes slows down what is done. He has been told some matters take months to be resolved and that it would be better to have the teachers work with the Technology Department instead of going through the librarian at a building. Mr. Sloat talked about having the help desk available, but if everyone called here instead of using the media person at a building, we would have such as escalation of calls, we couldn't handle them. He will look at additional alternatives to make sure the teachers' requests are handled faster. Mr. Wagner talked about the Microsoft ruling and how Iowa will receive about \$179 million but then there will be attorney fees coming out of that amount. We will end up with \$45 to \$70 million for the state. He talked about qualifying for the funding for technology purchases and applying for the district but having the money flow through to the individual buildings based on a formula. There was a lot of information to be reviewed but at least we have some idea of what we will need to do down the way. We will qualify and then we pay up front for items and then get a refund through a clearinghouse. The specifics on training, software and interventions are being reviewed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

President Zamora adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Linda Smith Kortemeyer, Board Secretary

